



REMARKS

1. Applicant wishes to thank Examiner for the courteous and helpful telephonic interview granted on July 13, 2004. Examiner indicated that the proposed amendments to base claims 1 and 13 were sufficient to overcome the prior art rejections in the Office Action, but that allowance of the claims would be subject to further searching on the amended features.

2. Claims 1 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Wolff-Mooij (US 4,610,469).

3. Claims 2-4, 7-12 and 16-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Wolff-Mooij (US 4,610,469) in view of Mayer (US 5,470,319).

4. Applicant submits that the amendments to the claims overcome the 102(b) and 103(a) rejections cited by the Examiner.

Examiner will note that, in each of the valved connectors disclosed by Wolff-Mooij and Mayer, a separate external piece is needed to urge the valve to an open position. (See, for example, FIG 3 of Wolff-Mooij and FIGS 5, 10, 15 and 16 of Mayer.) This is a feature that Applicant's invention expressly seeks to avoid, as stated in the Summary on page 3, lines 23-27, of the specification.

The use of a separate external piece to open the valve in Wolff-Mooij and Mayer prevents the valved connector from having a proximal end of the tubular body exposed on the exterior of the valved connector and, consequently, does not provide an open channel for introducing a secondary device to be inserted through the connector body when the valve is in the open position, as recited in base claims 1 and 13.

These modifications would not be obvious from Wolff-Mooij or Mayer, either separately or in combination, because it would be contrary to the intended use of these devices.

The amended claims are therefore submitted as patentable over the cited prior art.

5. New claims 20-24 are also submitted to be patentable over the cited prior art for these same reasons. Because claims 20-24 are dependent on allowable base claims, no new issues are

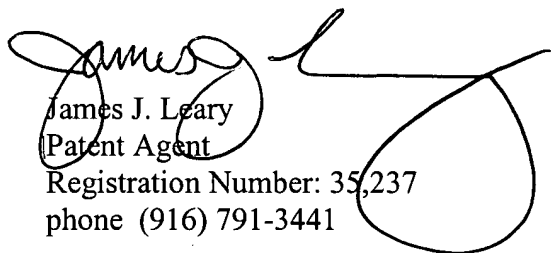
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raised that would require additional searching or Examination. Claims 20, 22 and 23 are directed to the elected species of FIG 5. Claims 21 and 24 are directed to the non-elected species of FIG 7. Allowable base claims 1 and 13 are generic to all species of the disclosed invention, therefore claims 20-24 should all be allowable in the same patent application.

CONCLUSION

Applicant submits that the claims all define novel subject matter that is unobvious. Therefore, allowance of such claims is submitted to be proper and is respectfully requested. If Examiner deems that additional changes are needed prior to allowance of the claims, Examiner is urged to initiate a telephonic interview with applicant's representative at the telephone number listed below.

Very respectfully submitted,



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CLAIMS LISTING

1. (Currently amended) A valved connector, comprising:
a connector body having a tubular portion extending proximally therefrom, said tubular portion having a proximal end and a distal end; and
a valve body including a valve element with a passage therethrough, said valve body being axially movable with respect to said connector body, ~~at least a portion of said valve body being located on an exterior of said valved connector,~~
wherein said valve body is movable from a closed position in which said tubular portion of said connector body is ~~exterior~~ external to said passage of said valve element to an open position in which said tubular portion of said connector body ~~is applied against~~ extends through said valve element from a distal side to a proximal side to at least partially open said valve element and wherein said proximal end of said tubular body is exposed on the exterior of said valved connector thereby providing an open channel for introducing a secondary device to be inserted through said connector body.
2. (Cancel) The valved connector of claim 1, wherein, when said valve body is in its open position, said tubular portion of said connector body is applied against a distal surface of said valve element.
3. (Cancel) The valved connector of claim 1, wherein, when said valve body is in its open position, said tubular portion of said connector body extends through said passage of said valve element.
4. (Cancel) The valved connector of claim 3, wherein, in moving from said closed position to said open position, said tubular portion extending from said connector body penetrates said valve element from a distal side to a proximal side.
5. (Original) The valved connector of claim 1, wherein said connector body is configured in a Y-shape with a main channel and a lateral channel branching therefrom, said valve body being positioned at a proximal end of said main channel, said connector body having a first attachment means at a distal end of said main channel and a second attachment means at a proximal end of said lateral channel.

6. (Original) The valved connector of claim 5, wherein said first attachment means comprises a male luer lock connector and said second attachment means comprises a female luer lock connector.

7. (Original) The valved connector of claim 1, wherein when said valve body is in said closed position said passage of said valve element closes to form a fluid tight seal.

8. (Original) The valved connector of claim 1, wherein when said valve body is in said open position said connector body presents an uninterrupted channel without obstacles for introducing a secondary device inserted through said connector body.

9. (Original) The valved connector of claim 1, wherein when said valve body is in said closed position said passage of said valve element closes to form a fluid tight seal around a secondary device inserted through said passage.

10. (Original) The valved connector of claim 1, further comprising a sliding seal between said valve body and said connector body.

11. (Original) The valved connector of claim 1, further comprising a sliding seal between said valve element and said tubular portion extending from said connector body.

12. (Original) The valved connector of claim 1, wherein said valve element is made of an elastomeric material.

13. (Currently amended) A valved connector, comprising:
a connector body having a tubular portion extending proximally therefrom, said tubular portion having a proximal end and a distal end, and
a valve body including a valve element with a passage therethrough, said valve body being positioned at a proximal end of said connector body and axially movable with respect to said connector body, ~~at least a portion of said valve body being located on an exterior of said valved connector,~~

wherein said valve body is movable from a closed position in which said tubular portion of said connector body is ~~exterior~~ external to said passage of said valve element to an open position in which said tubular portion of said connector body extends through said passage of said valve element from a distal side to a proximal side of said valve element, wherein when said valve body is in said closed position said passage of said valve element closes to form a fluid

tight seal, wherein when said valve body is in said open position said proximal end of said tubular body is exposed on the exterior of said valved connector thereby providing ~~presents~~ an open channel for introducing a secondary device to be inserted through said connector body, and wherein when said valve body is in said closed position with the secondary device inserted therethrough, said passage of said valve element closes to form a fluid tight seal around the secondary device.

14. (Previously amended) The valved connector of claim 19, wherein said first attachment means comprises a male luer lock connector and said second attachment means comprises a female luer lock connector.

15. (Previously amended) The valved connector of claim 19, wherein said first attachment means comprises a rotating male luer lock connector and said second attachment means comprises a female luer lock connector.

16. (Original) The valved connector of claim 13, further comprising a sliding seal between said valve body and said connector body.

17. (Original) The valved connector of claim 13, further comprising a sliding seal between said valve element and said tubular portion extending from said connector body.

18. (Original) The valved connector of claim 13, wherein said valve element is made of an elastomeric material.

19. (Previously added) The valved connector of claim 13, wherein said connector body is configured in a Y-shape with a main channel and a lateral channel branching therefrom, said valve body being positioned at a proximal end of said main channel, said connector body having a first attachment means at a distal end of said main channel and a second attachment means at a proximal end of said lateral channel.

20. (NEW) The valved connector of claim 1, wherein the connector body has a proximal end with a cylindrical boss having an annular groove therein, the tubular portion extending proximally from the cylindrical boss, the valve body having an internal bore having a sliding fit with the cylindrical boss on the proximal end of the connector body, a toroidal O-ring within the annular groove forming a fluidtight sliding seal between the valve body and cylindrical boss, a

detent on a distal end of the internal bore of the valve body to limit the axial motion of the valve body in the proximal direction with respect to the cylindrical boss.

21. (NEW) The valved connector of claim 1, wherein the connector body has a proximal end with a cylindrical boss, the tubular portion extending proximally from the cylindrical boss, the valve body having an internal bore having a sliding fit with the cylindrical boss on the proximal end of the connector body, a detent on a distal end of the internal bore of the valve body to limit the axial motion of the valve body in the proximal direction with respect to the cylindrical boss, the valve element configured with a central bore that is axially aligned with the passage therethrough, the central bore having a sliding fit with the tubular portion of the connector body forming a fluidtight sliding seal between the tubular portion and the valve element.

22. (NEW) The valved connector of claim 1, wherein the valve body is threaded to the connector body, such that rotating the valve body moves the valve body axially with respect to the connector body.

23. (NEW) The valved connector of claim 19, wherein the connector body is configured with a cylindrical boss on the proximal end of the main channel, the tubular portion extending proximally from the cylindrical boss, the valve body having an internal bore having a sliding fit with the cylindrical boss, the cylindrical boss having an annular groove with a toroidal O-ring within the annular groove forming a fluidtight sliding seal between the valve body and the cylindrical boss, a detent on a distal end of the internal bore of the valve body to limit the axial motion of the valve body in the proximal direction with respect to the cylindrical boss.

24. (NEW) The valved connector of claim 19, wherein the connector body is configured with a cylindrical boss on the proximal end of the main channel, the tubular portion extending proximally from the cylindrical boss, the valve body having an internal bore having a sliding fit with the cylindrical boss, a detent on a distal end of the internal bore of the valve body to limit the axial motion of the valve body in the proximal direction with respect to the cylindrical boss, the valve element configured with a central bore that is axially aligned with the passage therethrough, the central bore having a sliding fit with the tubular portion of the connector body forming a fluidtight sliding seal between the tubular portion and the valve element.